

Report of the

Canadian Delegates

TO THE

Third Assembly of the League of Nations

September 3 to 30, 1922

PRINTED BY ORDER OF PARLIAMENT



OTTAWA
F. A. ACLAND
PRINTER TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY
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LONDON, October 16, 1922.

To His Excellency

The Governor General in Council:

The undersigned delegates appointed to represent Canada at the Third Assembly of the League of Nations have the honour to report as follows:—

The Assembly met at Geneva on Monday, September 3, and continued its sittings until Saturday, September 30. The Canadian delegates remained in attendance throughout.

The business of the Assembly is distributed among six large committees as follows:—

First Committee—Legal and constitutional questions.

Second Committee—Technical organizations.

Third Committee—Reduction of armaments.

Fourth Committee—Budget and financial questions.

Fifth Committee—Social and general questions.

Sixth Committee—Political questions.

The plan of distribution is so arranged that where a country has three delegates it may be represented on all these committees. Thus, Mr. Fielding served on the Third Committee (Disarmament), and on the Fifth Committee (Social and general questions). Mr. Lapointe served on the First Committee (Legal and constitutional), and on the Sixth Committee (Political questions). Mr. Larkin served on the Second Committee (Technical organizations), and on the Fourth Committee (Finance).

Mr. Fielding was chosen Chairman of the Fifth Committee. This position carried with it a seat on the Bureau, or General Committee of the Assembly, which was composed of the President, six Vice-presidents, and the Chairmen of the six large committees herein referred to.

While there was not before the Assembly any question of special importance to Canada, many matters of wide interest were considered by the several committees and in due course the conclusions reached by these committees were reported to the Assembly and the Assembly's decision taken thereon.

The action of a Canadian representative at previous meetings left on the agenda for the Third Assembly a proposal on behalf of Canada to strike out Article 10 of the Covenant of the League of Nations. This proposal had received considerable attention at the previous meetings and its consideration had been postponed until the meeting of the Third Assembly. It did not appear that the proposal had found favour in any quarter in the Assembly. It had, on the contrary, aroused marked hostility. The French representatives were particularly strong in their objections to the elimination of the Article. Many of the smaller nations too were disposed to regard the Article as a protection against aggression and naturally did not look with approval on the proposal to strike it out. As the question remained on the agenda from last year, it was necessary for the delegates of the present year to determine what action should

be taken concerning it. In view of the wide differences of opinion which existed as to the proper meaning of Article 10, we suggested that, instead of striking it out, as proposed by Canada's representatives at previous meetings, it be allowed to stand with the addition of a few explanatory words.

Article 10 as it stands in the Covenant reads as follows:—

"The Members of the League undertake to respect and preserve as against external aggression the territorial integrity and existing political independence of all Members of the League. In case of any such aggression or in the case of any threat or danger of such aggression the Council shall advise upon the means by which this obligation shall be fulfilled."

With the addition of the words proposed, the Article would read:—

"The Members of the League undertake to respect and preserve as against external aggression the territorial integrity and existing political independence of all Members of the League. In case of any such aggression or in case of threat or danger of such aggression the Council shall advise upon the means by which this obligation shall be fulfilled, taking into account the political and geographical circumstances of each State. The opinion given by the Council in such cases shall be regarded as a matter of the highest importance, and shall be taken into consideration by all the Members of the League, who shall use their utmost endeavours to conform to the conclusions of the Council; but no Member shall be under the obligation to engage in any act of war without the consent of its Parliament, legislature, or other representative body."

The amendment was considered by the First Committee (Legal and constitutional) and a recommendation was made as follows:—

"The Assembly of the League of Nations decides that the Canadian proposal with regard to Article 10 of the Covenant shall be adjourned until the Fourth Assembly, in order that the subject may be considered in all its bearings. The Assembly leaves it to the Council to decide on the steps to be taken to provide for a detailed study of the Canadian proposal before the meeting of the Fourth Assembly."

When this report came before the Assembly for approval a strong speech was made by Mr. Joseph Barthelemy, representing France, who argued against any interference with Article 10 as it stands. Mr. Fielding replied, and the report of the committee was adopted.

At the Second Assembly, on the motion of a Canadian Delegate, a resolution was adopted expressing hope of an early settlement of the question of the status of Eastern Galicia. That matter being still unsettled, Mr. Fielding moved a renewal of the expression of last year in the following terms:—

"The Assembly of the League of Nations renews its wish, expressed in the resolution adopted by the Second Assembly on September 27, 1921, that the Council of the League draw the attention of the Principal Allied and Associated Powers to the desirability of determining at an early date the status of Eastern Galicia."

The resolution was adopted.

The question of the allocation of the expenses of the League which had been considered at previous Assemblies again came up.

Under the provisions of the Covenant, the expenses of the League were allocated between the various countries in the proportion established for the

SESSIONAL PAPER No. 36

International Bureau of the Universal Postal Union. This arrangement required Canada to pay the same sum—about \$200,000—as was required of one of the great nations, Great Britain for example. That the scale of payments so determined operated unfairly to a number of the smaller nations was recognized. At the Second Assembly a committee appointed to deal with the matter proposed another scale of distribution, under which Canada's proportion would be reduced to about \$150,000. This distribution, however, did not come into operation for the reason that it failed to receive the endorsement of the required number of Members of the League. The original scale of distribution therefore remains in operation as respects the present year. The whole question was further considered at the latest Assembly and a rearrangement was agreed upon to take effect next year. The amount required from Canada will be \$183,668.03.

The resolutions and recommendations adopted by the Assembly are available in the official printed Journal.

W. S. FIELDING,
ERNEST LAPOINTE,
PETER C. LARKIN.

